

CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION AND IDENTITY IN EUROPE

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1. CHANGE IN EUROPE

The political, economic and social characteristics of Europe have changed dramatically over the past sixty years, as they have in most of the world. All European countries are considerably more prosperous, with a more educated population, and have a much more sophisticated and technological economic base. Europe has also largely been internally at peace for this period, which is an unprecedented change on earlier times. European countries have divested themselves of their global empires (not always initially willingly, but generally amicably). The population of European countries has also substantially diversified, with major inward population flows from particularly former colonies. In some of the western European countries, over 10% of the population is of non-European origin, with third and fourth generations established as citizens. There has been even larger intra-European migration and settlement.

These changes have been accompanied by a unique political sequence of events, in the gradual creation, over the past 50 years, of what is now called the European Union (EU): a free association of states, now 27 in number, all of whom accept a common basis of human rights and have established a common political, legal, social and economic system that runs alongside their own national system. This includes free internal trading in goods, services and labour, simplified mobility with a common EU passport, and for many, a common currency. There is a fledgling European parliament, elected in a Europe-wide election. The member countries all subscribe to the European Court of Human Rights and the European Court of Justice, which have judicial powers, civil and criminal, that surpass those of the member states. All states in the Union accept the European Convention on Human Rights (Council of Europe, 1950), which creates legal rights for Europeans that are superior and enforceable above the state level. The European Union's Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (European Union, 2000) includes precepts concerning democratic forms of government, and of the rights of citizens, which members of the Union enforce through their own law and through the European Human Rights court in Strasbourg.

This has broken the link between human rights and the territory of the nation state; it is "a new model of membership, anchored in the deterritorialised notions of person rights" (Soysal, 1997). These new forms of citizenship uncouple rights from territory, as political rights are given and guaranteed by a body greater than the nation-state. The Treaty of Maastricht introduced the idea of 'citizenship of the Union', held by all citizens of member states in the Union. Any citizen of a member state has the right, as a European citizen, to vote and stand for office in local and European elections, and to move between states and live in any one of them. Shore and Black (1994) noted that this had been an aspiration of many who wanted to develop a 'People's Europe', a form of supranational identity. These moves, it is argued, allow the individual European to identify with both the European Union and their own national state. This multiple nationality, paralleling a multiple identity, is one that can be adopted by the individual contingent on their particular position.

Educational provision largely remains formally outside the European Union, though in Higher Education there is considerable student exchange, and moves to harmonise qualifications, training and definitions of provision: these will allow increasing mobility as degrees acquire a common and easily understood currency with employers and universities. The CiCe network described in this article has developed out of part of this harmonisation and movement to what has become called the European Higher Education Area. The Bologna Process is a ten year programme to try and agree a common structure and description for undergraduate, postgraduate and research degrees.

2. SINGULAR AND MULTIPLE IDENTITIES

Identity and citizenship have become concepts used with a wide variety of meanings. Several recent writers have suggested that individuals do not have singular identities, but a repertoire of different identities. The individual will use each of these, or a combination of them, contingently on where they are, whom they are with, and the particular social setting in which they find themselves (e.g. Hall, 1992, 1996, 1997). Hall attacked the idea that the individual was “fully centred, unified ... endowed with capacities of reason, consciousness and action” (1992:275), seeing identity instead as “composed of not a single, but of several, sometimes contradictory or unresolved, identities” (276-7). Amaryta Sen has attacked “the fallacy of singular identity”: he argues that “forcing people into boxes of singular identity try[s] ... to understand human beings not as persons with diverse identities but predominantly as members of one particular social group or community” (Sen, 2006:176), whereas we might wish to identify ourselves with a whole variety of possible identity descriptors, such as feminist, Asian, an Indian citizen, of Bengali origin, a British resident, a man, a non-believer, and a defender of gay and lesbian rights (Sen, 2006:19). Gundara cites a similar set of examples of young people’s multiple identities, arguing that they contribute to meeting the challenge of how “experimental democratic education can guarantee social integration in highly differentiated contexts” (Gundara, 2006:25). Some of the identities that Sen and Gundara list can be grouped as related to place or geographic location, and in many cases these places nest one within another. Other of these identities could be classed as membership of or belonging to a group (British, working class), while others are descriptions of identity as set of relationships (such as friend, or parent).

Identities thus become contingent. The identity or group of identities selected for presentation is a response to the group(s) that constitute the audience, to the location of the encounter, and to the history and events that preceded it. To give a current example in Europe, a young woman of Turkish descent living in Turkey might variously describe herself as German, Turkish, of Turkish origin, a feminist, a Muslim, a Kurd, a European citizen, a German speaker, bilingual —depending on whom she was describing herself, and in what context. All of these descriptions would be accurate, and would from time to time be the most prominent or significant aspect of whom she was.

This view of identities, as a palate of pigments from which colours and combinations can be selected at will, is contested: for example, Brubaker and Cooper (2000) argue that identity should be used only in a ‘strong’ meaning, to represent an unchanging and long-lasting sense of the self (generally linked to the sense of national identity). They contrast this ‘weak’ meanings of alternative identities with a lack of permanence and fluidity. They criticise Hall for arguing that identities are employed to meet an individual’s contingent needs, rather than their permanent characteristics. Hall was not, however, arguing that all identities are constantly in flux: people usually maintain an essentially constant repertoire of identities, each more or less to the fore in a particular set of social

contexts; the individual has a single self, expressed through different identities, which are expressed as relationships to others: they are constructed in social contexts and indeed would be meaningless if divorced from social settings.

Jamieson (2002, 2005) extends Hall and Gundara's positions: she uses a social constructionist position to argue that some of these identities are more likely to be 'primary' identities than others, and there are conditions in which some supra-national identities (such as European) are more likely to be primary than local identities. Implicit in social constructivism is the idea that we can only develop our sense of self-identity through social processes: all of our identities are socially determined as we define ourselves in relationship to others, whether as in a direct relationship or as the same as or different to the other. Others will also be simultaneously defining our identity in their terms, based on their perceptions and constructions of who they think or assume our identity to be, and this will not always correspond —indeed, may sometimes be in direct opposition— to the identities we wish to assume.

3. CITIZENSHIP AND IDENTITIES, EUROPEAN AND NATIONAL

Aspects of European Citizenship established by the Treaty of Maastricht include the creation of a common passport, free movement within the Union, and common border controls and a common currency for many of the states. These moves, it is argued, allow the individual European to identify with both the European Union and their own national state. Lutz *et al* (2006) draw on extensive Eurobarometer data (a form of regular and systematic European opinion gathering) to suggest that a growing proportion of young people in the European Community are acknowledging an at least partial sense of European identity, alongside their national identity: the degree to which this is acknowledged varies by nationality, gender and social class, as well as by age.

Strong or primary identities have traditionally been associated with national identity. Ernest Gellner observed "a man [sic] must have a nationality as he must have a nose and two ears" (Gellner 1983:6), and Anthony Smith in particular has argued that national identity trumps all others:

Where once each ethnic community was a world unto itself, the centre of the universe, the light amid darkness, now the heritage and culture values from the storehouse of that same community, selected, reinterpreted and reconstituted, form one unique, incommensurable national identity among many other, equally unique, cultural identities. (Smith 1991:84)

Others see this as problematic. Do all French citizens see themselves as French? Research on early 20th Century France indicates that many rural provincial inhabitants did not identify themselves as French (Weber, 1976), and a study of French students in a Paris school in the early 21st Century found many of them challenging their presumed incorporation into the republican conception of 'Frenchness' (Mannitz, 2004). Benedict Anderson (1983, 2001) describes nation-state communities as creating identities that were larger than the personal and direct: an imagined political community, imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign. It is imagined because members will never know most of their fellow-members, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion. It is limited because it has finite, though elastic boundaries, beyond which lie other nations. It is sovereign because it came to maturity at a stage of human history when freedom was a rare and precious ideal. And it is imagined as a community because it is conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship. But the degree to which these individual imaginations have a consistent core is unclear, and may be becoming less clear. There have been, as Anderson observes, various devices and practices to foster a sense of

joint imagination: symbolic events in history, identified to be shared as significant for the nation; iconic symbols of nationality, from maps and coinage to postage stamps and national airlines; and enactive processes that encourage assimilation and participation in national activities, such as military conscription, the extension of the franchise, participating in national censuses and holidays, and education into a national language, literature and culture.

In the case of Great Britain, Linda Colley (1992) has shown how the nation was ‘forged’ (both in the heat of the forge and through the deceit of the forger) through a deliberate process of othering, mercantilism, empire-building and the development of a powerful elite. The essays collected by Hobsbawm and Range (1983) illustrate a series of invented traditions that were used to bolster national identities. All these analyses are rather more sceptical of the authenticity and primacy of the nationalism of Smith, with its conception of a deep and shared ‘ethnie’.

4. THE YOUNG PERSON’S CONSTRUCTION OF IDENTITIES

One of the consequences of the growth of national identity was the development of national systems of education, designed as much to reproduce feelings of national identity as to sustain national economies (Green, 1990). Smith observes “most governments since the end of the 19th Century have seen it as one of their prime duties to establish, fund and increasingly direct a mass system of public education ... in order to create [both] an efficient labour force and [a] loyal, homogeneous citizenry” (Smith, 1995:91). School curricula helped generate national and group identity through promulgating national myths and heroes as embodiments of ‘national character’ (Soysal, 2002; Schissler and Soysal, 2004).

But the categorisation of groups and identities is not always necessarily deep and fundamental—aligning oneself with a group does not always mean one feels a fundamental affinity with others who put themselves in the same group. In many cases feeling a sense of identity with others or of belonging to a group may be different and transient, and may be particularly temporary in childhood and adolescence. The processes of schooling often include children creating categories for groups of their peers who become ‘the other’. Such distinctions have been observed as based on ethnicity and race (Archer, 2003), gender (Hey, 1997), class and sexuality (Mac An Ghaill, 1994). Mannitz describes adolescents of migrant descent in contemporary European schools (London, Berlin, Amsterdam and Paris) as not just understanding such civil conventions but as having

“evidently internalised them and effectively made us of them in their strategies of identity management Conceptualisations were negotiated that concerned their own predispositions vis-à-vis the surrounding majority society, together with criteria and views regarding how to assess the presumed cultural differences between their home situations and wider society. ... As well as becoming German, French, Dutch or British, these young people have apparently adopted types of globally marketed youth culture” (Mannitz, 2004:308).

These other, non-national, identities will necessarily be as much imagined communities as Anderson’s nations. But they need not necessarily be based on a process of othering. While some (such as Rex, 1996a, 1996b) argue that the construction of European identity is equivalent to a new nationalism, based on exclusionism and anti-immigration (despite the Union’s rhetoric of anti-racism and anti-xenophobia), others argue that European identity has little sense of ‘the other’. Soysal (2006) argues that there is little that is unique or original in the distinction of the European. Her analysis of European school textbooks identifies the developing presentation of Europe as ‘a loose confection’

which is future-orientated, rather than focussed on the past; that does not contrast itself with the other; and acknowledges that 'European' characteristics of rights, society and welfare are not a monopoly of Europeans.

Citizenship and civil identity can be constructed in terms that do not necessarily relate to national identity. Heater and Oliver (1994) suggested individuals become citizens when they practice civil virtue and good citizenship, enjoy but do not exploit their civil and political rights, contribute to and receive social and economic benefits, do not allow any sense of national identity to justify discrimination or stereotyping of others, experiences senses of non-exclusive multiple citizenship and, by their example, teach citizenship to others (1994:6). This definition does not elaborate the meaning of terms such as civic virtue, but does stress practice and participation. Citizenship is an important aspect of our identities: it is that aspect that involves our political engagement and participation in a community. W J M Mackenzie has described it as a community associated with a place:

... those who share an interest, share an identity; the interest of each requires the collaboration of all. Those who share a place share an identity. Prima facie this is a fair statement, whether 'the place' is taken to be 'space-ship earth'; or a beloved land; or a desolate slum or a public housing scheme. (Mackenzie, 1978)

Citizenship thus requires the collaboration of all. Citizenship, in this sense, can be seen as a duty, a necessary part of being a member of a community. For a community to work, the members must participate. Involvement or participation is an active state – it is not merely accepting a label, assenting to be a part of something. Finally, it is something that everyone should do: it is a communal activity, not just a spectator activity, and certainly not an elite pursuit.

5. A NETWORK OF TEACHER EDUCATORS AND OTHERS

We established a network of university departments in Europe concerned with these issues in 1998. We came together under a programme organised by the European Commission's Department of Education and Culture, the Erasmus Thematic Networks programme. Although the Commission has no powers in the field of education, it is able to support educational activities that support the development of European cooperation and integration, and it is also to support activities that promote European citizenship, that contribute to equality of opportunity, and that counter racism and xenophobia. The Commission, which loves programmes named after famous Europeans as much as it loves acronyms, has a broad set of educational programmes called *Socrates* (being replaced in 2007 by the 'Life Long learning programme'). This includes specific programmes for schools, *Comenius* (the Czech 17th century teacher and scientist) for vocational education, *Leonardo*, for life-long learning, *Grundvig*, (the Danish 19th century teacher and philosopher). For university education, the *Erasmus* programme is most widely known for promoting a system of student exchanges, where undergraduates travel to study in a different country for a semester, and their study abroad is credited to their degree. About 1.4 million students have so far taken part in this.

A smaller element of Erasmus is the support of about thirty Thematic networks. These are networks of University departments who agree to work together promoting European higher educational activities, in a subject discipline (such as Chemistry and History), or a theme (such as Citizenship education). One of the rules for such networks is that they must include at least one university from every country in the Union: in CiCe we therefore have members in all 27 countries of the Union (except Luxembourg), as well as Norway and Iceland. We have about 105 different

university members in all. Technically, our organising university is London Metropolitan University, who hold a contract with the Commission to run the network. London Metropolitan then has agreements with each of the 104 other partners. The network in fact is largely directed by and elected executive and chair: the executive currently has members drawn from the United Kingdom, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Greece, Hungary and Poland.

Our activities have developed in a series of phases, each of which is separately contracted with the Commission. We are currently working on six parallel strands:

1. The promotion of common policies and information about university courses that prepare students who will work professionally with children and young people in the area of citizenship education and the development of identities. We include those educating teachers, early years educators, youth workers, social pedagogues and social psychologists. We exchange information on courses —structures, contents, practices— and on the ways in which citizenship education is practiced in our member countries, in schools and preschools and in informal situations. We publish a series of guideline papers on aspects of these, produced by working groups of our members.
2. Another strand is the development of harmonised outcomes for our taught undergraduate and postgraduate courses. The ‘Tuning Process’ is a European initiative to agree on the outcomes we expect students to achieve —the competences they will have developed— as part of a degree programme. If there are agreed common competencies, then employers and professional organisations in different countries should be able to recognise and understand qualifications obtained in other countries. We have several working groups examining aspects of citizenship education.
3. The examination of aspects of citizenship education in other degree subjects is a third area of activity. Part of the Tuning process revealed that students, lecturers and employers generally did not rate the competences of intercultural understanding highly: we have a working group examining how such competences could be (and should be) developed in a range of different subject areas (chemistry, history, social work and religious studies).
4. Our fourth strand is the promotion of research. We have developed a research students’ conference and workshop programme, linked to our main conference, that takes a selected group of PhD students each year from a range of countries, and gives them intense multi-disciplinary training; they also present papers. We also have a programme to develop practice-based research activities in undergraduate programmes, and a research digest that updates members on current activities, publications and programmes.
5. We also wish to build better links with other ‘social actors’: we are aware that there are a wide range of non-governmental organisations and others who have an interest in promoting citizenship education, and we are trying to build links with them to discover how we can support each other. We’d like to see how they can contribute to our courses, and how we can include their materials and ideas.
6. Finally, we are anxious to develop global citizenship ideas, as much as European citizenship ideas. We are currently supporting working groups to examine aspects of global citizenship, and of how we incorporate global ideas about citizenship —and pupils and students from around the globe— in our various educational programmes. We hope to shortly expand this aspect with the development of a sister network, and Erasmus Mundus

Network, which will bring non-European universities into our network.

Our big annual event is a conference, usually held in May each year, each time in a different European city. These conferences include papers and presentations, but also include workshops, reports and consultations by our working parties, and much more.

Two other activities should be noted. We have developed a joint Masters programme in Citizenship education, which is taught and awarded by a consortium of five universities. The course is largely delivered through distance learning, through on-line modules that were developed by a partnership of 25 different European universities. Secondly, we have recently formed an independent association —the Children's Identity and Citizenship European Association— which is separate from the Commission. This has both individual and institutional membership (the Network can only have institutional members), and publishes a journal, *Citizenship Teaching and Learning*, in collaboration with the CitizED organisation.

Our programme revolves around many of the ideas discussed earlier in this article. We are particularly concerned with how schools and other institutions develop the skills of active citizenship, whether through formal or informal programmes, and with working with young people in understanding the diverse and multiple identities that are now common in many European societies. Much of our work in citizenship is developed around the conception of rights, and the way that rights are extended to minorities and diverse groups in society.

6. CITIZENSHIP AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF RIGHTS

Citizenship relates to identities, in the plural. Formally and in law, those who are citizens of states in the European Community are citizens of both their own individual nation-states and citizens of Europe, but it is possible in the broader sense to be citizens of more places, as Mackenzie describes (1978) —citizens of earth, or citizens of the traditional and original polis, the city— and of a range of places in between. Many may have dual nationality, with obligations and rights relating to two countries. The relationship between citizenship and rights has been developed by T H Marshall in the 1950s and John Urry in the 1990s.

Marshall suggested (1950) that citizenship is essentially about the establishment and the exercise of rights. Citizenship is belonging to a political entity that gives its members the protection of particular rights. Rights are intrinsically that which is defined by citizenship: as Montero (1992) puts it, “the defining and primordial element of citizenship is the enjoyment of political rights”. The idea that all people have ‘rights’ is a relatively new concept. Hobbes (1651), Locke (1690) and others explained civil society as a contractual relationship between people, who agreed to join together to create systems of person-made law that guaranteed particular rights —of liberty, property, political participation and freedom of expression. Unlike the absolutism or divine right that had characterised much political authority up to this point in history, these rights were dependant on the consent of the people.

Marshall proposed three stages in the development of the rights of citizenship —citizenship gave civil rights in the eighteenth century, political rights in the nineteenth century, and social rights in the twentieth century. Civil rights included the right to property, privacy, and to freedom of expression; political rights extended voting rights from the richer male property owners to the poor and to women; and social rights include education, health care, social security. Generally, this third

generation has not yet been addressed in any binding human rights agreement, but we are now extending our idea of rights yet further. John Urry (1995) has more recently brought together six new categories of rights within this third generation:

1. *Cultural citizenship* – each culture has the right to preserve its identity (Turner, 1993);
2. *Minority citizenship* – minorities have rights to reside in and remain in other societies, and have as full rights as the dominant group (Yuval-Davis, 1997);
3. *Ecological citizenship* – the right to live in a sustainable environment (van Steenberg, 1994);
4. *Cosmopolitan citizenship* – everyone has the right to relate to other citizens, cultures and societies without state interference (Held, 1995);
5. *Consumer citizenship* – the rights to open access to goods, services and information (Urry, 1995); and
6. *Mobility citizenship* – the rights of visitors and tourists moving through other countries and societies (Urry, 1990).

The traditional rights of citizenship came about by being members of a sovereign state, but this sovereignty has become eroded, particularly over the past sixty years: the state's right to grant citizenship and to rule on what rights citizens may have has been fragmented. This has come about in a variety of ways: the possibility of dual or multiple citizenship has grown greatly, for example. Certain rights have been placed above the nation-state: the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, for example, places a moral obligation on signatory states to respect greater rights. Much more significantly, the European Court of Human Rights and the European Court of Justice have judicial powers that surpass those of the member states.

7. Educational practice and the development of rights and active citizenship

This analysis of citizenship as essentially concerned with the establishment of rights, and the separation of these from the nation-state, has shown how communities establish identities, citizenship and rights. In particular, there are three ways in which citizens' rights are disseminated —through symbolic icons, through abstract conceptions, and through active participation. How should our pre-schools, schools, colleges and universities disseminate these ideas of citizenship to their students and learners? What does teaching this sort of citizenship entail?

In *Towards a Theory of Instruction* Jerome Bruner (1966) argues that “human beings have three ways of knowing —through action, through imagery, and through the medium of symbols. Each is a system with powers and shortcomings, but the special glory of man's mind is that he has three approaches to grasping things, and these are often translatable into each other in a fashion that permits not only deeper understanding but the ferreting out of contradiction and nonsense.” Bruner elaborated three modes of knowing:

- Enactive, where a person learns about the world through actions on objects;
- Iconic, where learning occurs through using models and pictures; and
- Symbolic, which describes the capacity to think in abstract terms.

Bruner's underlying principle for teaching and learning is that a combination of concrete, pictorial and symbolic activities will lead to more effective learning. The progression is to start with a concrete experience then move to pictures and finally use symbolic representation.

Studies of socio-political learning show how young children rapidly pick up iconic forms of the nation state and the community—for example, American six-year olds recognise the flag, the presidency, the White House and Congress (Hess and Torney, 1967; Easton and Dennis, 1969; Connell, 1971; Coles, 1986); and later in their schooling are introduced to the symbolic or conceptual representation, through civics lessons that describe the structures and processes, the lists of rights and duties. However, it is less common for students to critically engage in enactive forms of citizenship. Active citizenship is not simply about voluntary activity or service learning: this can simply be ameliorative—while socially useful, it does not in itself help students analyse social conditions, or to understand the reasons for social inequality. Active citizenship requires the ability to engage in action for social change, the establishment of active solidarity, and the extension of rights: of necessity, it is engaging in debate, discussion and controversy, and using skills of engaging with and arguing with alternative viewpoints.

Civic education has a strong tradition of transmitting symbolic and iconic aspects of citizenship. Bruner's third way of knowing, enactive learning, is less evident. Active engagement, particularly in areas of controversy, is seen by many teachers as problematic. Studies show that teachers are reluctant to engage in contemporary issues, and that they sidestep the contentious. Active learning requires engagement. This is not to argue that young people need not develop an appreciation and an understanding of the citizenship rights that have been achieved in the past. These rights were hard-fought for, and should be valued, and we should value those who fought for them. Not all of them are secure, and many rights that are formally established still need to be reiterated and argued for, both in Europe and elsewhere, particularly the rights of minorities. But how can we translate this abstract conceptual knowledge into enactive forms?

This paper has argued that citizenship has powerful links with identity and rights, both of which have been strongly associated with territory and nation. But these two areas have become increasingly complex and contested, and now provide fertile ground for young people to explore what citizenship means in an active and participatory manner.

It is here that rights-based citizenship may be of value, and particularly the developing waves of human rights described by Urry, rights yet to be attained. Many young people are actively concerned with and engaged in many of these issues, and the development of supra-national rights raises issues of sovereignty and of identity. The complex relationship between rights, identity and citizenship can be debated in a variety of contexts—local and national and other—and conceptions of citizenship can be discussed. When children and young people become aware of situations in which rights which they enjoy are denied to others, young people often actively engage in work with organisations such as Amnesty International in lobbying and demanding rights for others.

But a more general and personal approach would be through recognising that there are further rights to be obtained. Fraternity and solidarity, and Urry's list of new categories of rights suggest areas in which children and young people might become actively involved in arguing for and establishing: and it is in arguing for and achieving that enactive learning occurs. Indeed, many young people are engaged in many of these areas. For example, there is wide interest in, and sympathy for, the citizenship rights of diverse cultural groups, particularly in the face of globalisation, and of attempts to

preserve cultures and languages. Questions of asylum, settlement and migration concern minority citizenship and multiple and extended identities: international conventions on refugees are being challenged, and many young people are interested in actively defending and extending these rights. Ecological citizenship is a particular potent area that resonates well with young people: the right to live in a sustainable environment is an area of active participation and learning. Consumer citizenship is, for many young people, about actively making decisions, demanding consumer rights and exercising responsibilities, such as curtailing the exploitation of consumers, workers and natural resources.

These are the issues in which CiCe is concerned, and which we will continue to work for in the coming years.

CONTACTS

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For our newsletters: <http://cice.londonmet.ac.uk/members/opastnews.htm>

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